

D20-1
Winter 98 quiz

Identify author and title then discuss the passage in relation to the essay as a whole, and its significance to film theory. Explain the meaning or significance of any underlined words.

1. How often have we encountered just such a structure in the work of Griffith? This austere accumulation and quickening tempo, this gradual play of light ...this calculated transition from purely visual elements to an interweaving of them with aural elements....and finally these magnificently typical details, the reeking bodies of the cattle from which the steam rises and mingles with the over-all cloud of morning fog, or the close up of the legs in the almost ankle deep filth and mire, all this gives the fullest cinematic sensation of the panorama of a market...

2. So montage is conflict.

3. So why tell stories, narratives which always assume a chronology, sequential events, a gradation in facts and feelings?...There are no stories. There never have been stories. There are only situations.

4. A film metaphor is, as it were, a realized metaphor, actually embodied on the screen. Obviously, the point here is that in cinema, first of all, we are moving within the bounds not of verbal, but of cinematographic motivation; and, secondly the internal speech of the film viewer, which is forming itself on the basis of shots, is not realised in the shape of precise verbal formulations. We have an inverse relationship: whereas the verbal metaphor is not realized in the consciousness of the reader to the point of forming a clear visual image (i.e., the metaphorical sense shields us from the literal image), the film metaphor is not realized in the consciousness of the film viewer to the point of forming a complete verbal proposition.

Theorists often write in a way that constructs diametrical opposites in terms of the kind of films/cinema that is good and to be promoted and that which is bad and to be avoided. For the following figures describe good vs. bad films/media

Richter
Vertov
Epstein
Benjamin